



2020 Point-in-Time Count of Persons Experiencing Homelessness

Prepared for PA Balance of State

Eastern PA Continuum of Care
Western PA Continuum of Care

<https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/2020-pit-count/>

Presented by:

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 - Under contract with the PA DCED, funded through CoC Planning Grants
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What is the PIT count?

- A census or count of all people experiencing homelessness on a single night (i.e., at a given point in time), including some required demographic information and characteristics about those people, as defined in the annual HIC/PIT Data Collection Notice.
- HUD requires CoCs to conduct PIT counts of people experiencing homelessness.
- PIT Count includes:
 - Housing Inventory Chart
 - Sheltered PIT
 - Unsheltered PIT



Who is counted in the PIT count?



Sheltered PIT Count

- **Emergency shelters**
(including those using hotel and motel vouchers)
- **Transitional housing**
- **Safe Havens**

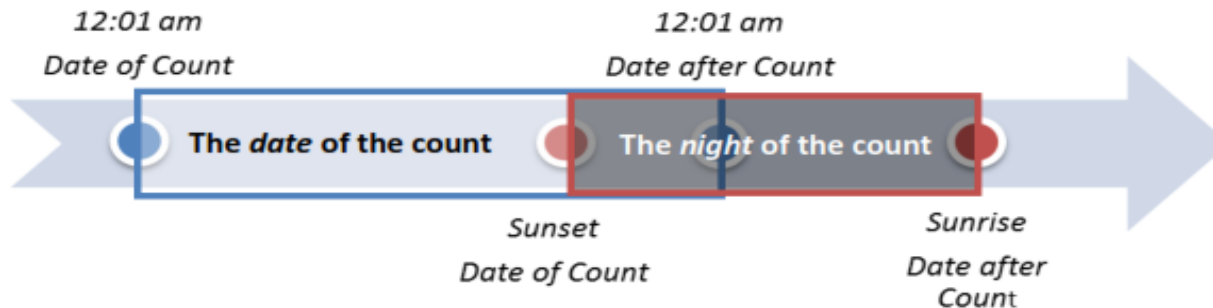


Unsheltered PIT Count

- **Car**
- **Park**
- **Abandoned building**
- **Bus or train station**
- **Airport**
- **Camping ground**
- **Parking Lot**

When is the PIT count conducted?

- CoC program regulations require sheltered and unsheltered counts to be “conducted on one night in the last 10 calendar days of January.”
- Wednesday, January 22, 2020
 - This means the period of time from Wednesday night through Thursday morning.





Overall PIT Timeline

- Fall 2019: County-level planning meetings begin
- November 15, 2019: PIT webinar **YOU ARE HERE!**
- November 2019: Unsheltered PIT interview forms distributed
- December 2019/ January 2020: Confirmation of all sheltered programs and PIT contact, identification of new/closed programs
- January 2020: HMIS Data quality check of sheltered programs
- **JANUARY 22, 2020: PIT COUNT DATE**
- February 2020: All data due to DMA
- February – March 2020: Data entry, checks for duplication, follow-up with questions
- March 30, 2020: Submit all data to HUD (***we are moving up the timeline***)
- Before May 31, 2020: County-level PIT reports distributed



SHELTERED PIT COUNT

- Housing Inventory Chart (HIC)
 - Point-in-Time Count (PIT)

- HIC= beds/units
 - PIT= people



Housing Inventory Count (HIC)

Bed Type	McKinney-Vento (ESG)	HMIS participating	Beds HH w/ Children	Units HH w/ Children	Beds HH w/o Children	Beds HH w/ only Children	Population designated beds?	Year-Round Beds	Total Seasonal Beds	Seasonal operating dates	Overflow Beds	PIT Count
Other beds	No	no	0	0	0	0		0	20	10/5/15 - 5/8/16		13
Other beds	No	no	0	0	10	0	10 veteran beds	10	0			4
Other beds	No	no	9	3	0	0		9				9
Other beds	No	no			29	0		29	0			29
Other beds	No	no	15	3	0	0		15				0
Facility-based beds	No	no			0			0	20	12/1/15 - 4/1/16		17
Facility-based beds	No	no	0	0	3	0		3	0			0
Other beds	No	no							15	10/1/15 - 4/30/16		10
Other beds	No	no	14	1	0	0		14	0			14
Facility-based beds	No	no	12	1	30	0		42	0			29
Other beds	Yes	no							19	11/1/15 - 3/31/16		19
Facility-based beds	Yes	no	18	4	13	0		31				31
Facility-based beds	No	no			12		12 veteran beds	12				13



Housing Inventory Count (HIC)

- Includes all:
 - Emergency Shelters (ES)
 - Domestic violence shelters
 - Hotel/motel vouchers
 - Transitional Housing (TH)
 - Rapid Re-Housing projects (RRH)
 - Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
 - Other Permanent Housing (OPH)



Types of Homeless Projects to Include in the HIC

- Beds and units in the HIC must be dedicated to serving households experiencing homelessness, or for permanent housing projects, dedicated for persons who were homeless at entry. **For the purposes of the HIC, a project with dedicated beds/units is one where:**
 - A. The primary intent of the project is to serve persons experiencing homelessness;**
 - B. The project verifies homeless status as part of its eligibility determination;**
 - C. The actual project clients are predominantly homeless (or, for permanent housing, were homeless at entry).**
- Beds in institutional settings not specifically dedicated for persons who are homeless such as detox facilities, emergency rooms, jails, and acute crisis or treatment centers **should not** be included in the HIC.



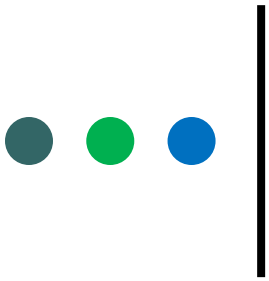
HIC Data Collection Tool

- **Online survey:** The week of the PIT count, DMA will send a link to an online survey. ALL projects (including ALL project types- ES, TH, RRH, PSH, other permanent housing) must complete the online survey... **even if the program is in HMIS**
- **Online survey requests:**
 - Capacity = total # units *and* beds
 - Configuration of units/beds
 - Funding Source
 - Count of persons in program



Sheltered Point-in-Time Count (PIT)

- Includes all Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing programs
- PIT Data source: HMIS *or* Interview Forms *or* Mobile App
 - HMIS users will be notified in advance of the PIT count as to whether their data quality passes pre-test. If yes, the project will not need to collect sheltered PIT data.
 - All other projects will collect data using Interview Forms **or** using the Mobile App. (Program level decision.)



UNSHELTERED PIT COUNT



Unsheltered Count - When?

**The Unsheltered PIT Count date
is January 22, 2020.**

This refers to the overnight hours on
Wednesday evening through
Thursday morning.

*****NOTE:** The date cannot be changed by one county or RHAB. The entire CoC must conduct the count on the same date. Please contact Jessica Sones or Leigh Howard at DMA if you have an issue arise on/right before the PIT date.***



Unsheltered Count – Where?

Count includes individuals sleeping
in these types of locations:

- Streets/sidewalks
- Vehicles
- Parks
- Hunting cabins
- Tents
- Campgrounds
- Barns
- Truck Stops
- Abandoned buildings
- Bus station/
transportation depots
- Chicken coops
- Railroad cars
- Storage units
- Lumberyards



Unsheltered Count – Where?

Unsheltered Count DOES NOT include individuals living in these locations:

- Hotels/motels not funded through public/charitable resources
- Shelters, transitional, or permanent homeless programs
- Jails/prison
- Emergency rooms/hospitals
- Halfway houses
- Recovery houses
- Residential/medical facilities
- Youth in custody of state in foster care or other out-of-home placement
- Doubled up in the homes of family/friends



Unsheltered Count – How?

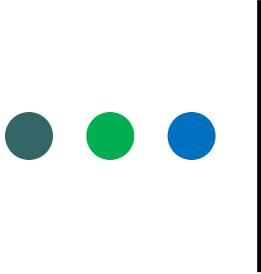
Methods:

- Street-based count
 - Complete coverage
 - Known locations only
 - Combination of complete coverage and known locations
- Service-based count
- “Come and be counted” locations



Unsheltered Count - Street-based count

- **Street-based count** is conducted by walking and/or driving through a community seeking to identify individuals/families who may be experiencing homelessness. Types of street-based counts include:
 - **Complete Coverage** – Attempt to count unsheltered individuals/families across an entire county, or to cover specific portions of the county.
 - **Known locations only** – Count conducted at locations where individuals/families experiencing homelessness are likely to be located.
 - **Combination of complete coverage and known locations** – This is when teams conduct the count in known locations in addition to a minimal amount of complete coverage.



Unsheltered Count - Street-based count

- “Street-based” count to be conducted the night of January 22 or day/night of January 23
 - January 22: Ask, “where will you sleep tonight”?
 - January 23: Ask, “where did you sleep last night”?



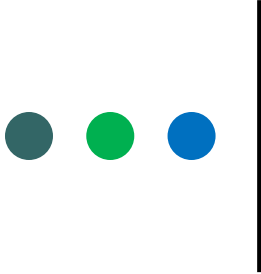
Unsheltered Count - Service-based count

- **Service-Based Count.** Staff or volunteers interview participants of programs that provide non-shelter services to persons who are homeless. Examples: drop in center, day program, soup kitchens, food pantries, benefits offices, veteran centers, and mainstream social service programs.
 - **There is a separate interview form for the service-based count.**
- **Combination.** Both a street-based and service-based count.



Unsheltered Count - Service-based count

- “Service-based” count must be conducted on **Thursday, January 23**, asking, “Where did you sleep last night?”



Unsheltered Count – Come and be counted location

- One method that has proven successful for counting homeless youth is a “come and be counted” type of location or event during the PIT count (*though this does not have to be limited to youth*)
- This is when you select a location, based on input from youth, that is known to be safe and comfortable for youth to congregate
- The date and location is advertised to youth prior to the count and they *come to be counted*



Unsheltered Count – Who?

All household types:

- Families with children
- Couples, married and unmarried
- Single individuals
- Youth
 - unaccompanied children < age 18
 - unaccompanied youth, 18-24
 - parenting youth



Unsheltered Count Guiding Principles

- Safety
- Anonymity
- Complete information
- Each person counted
- Each person counted once



Unsheltered Count: When to conduct count by observation only

Interviewer: If you are unable to survey an individual/household that you believe to be experiencing homelessness, because individual/household is asleep or is unable or unwilling to be interviewed or to complete the full interview, please provide the following information to the best of your ability based on what you can observe for each person within the household. (Each household should be submitted as a separate survey.)

- Individual/household is asleep/bedded down
- Individual/household is unwilling to be interviewed/complete the full interview, but you believe them to be experiencing homelessness.
 - E.g. on a park bench outside in winter with all of their belongings
 - E.g. the individual is known to you and your team
- *If you are conducting a service-based count, county coordinators should determine whether observation-only counts are appropriate*
 - It may make sense to only do observation counts during the street-based count



Unsheltered Count: When to conduct count by observation only

- **Write down as much detail as possible that helps to make the person identifiable and to provide clues on their housing status.**
 - What is the person **wearing**? (e.g., “black beanie, navy sweatshirt, jeans, and tan utility boots.” or “bundled in a grey, puffy sleeping bag that covered their face.”)
 - What does the person **look like**? (e.g., “shoulder-length grey hair, white, female, 50-60 years old”)
 - **Why** were you unable to complete a survey with them? (e.g., “They said they did not want to complete a survey, but they were awake.”)
 - **Where** did you see them? (e.g., “In front of the TD bank at the corner of 6th and Cedar St.”)
 - What makes you think that they are or may be **experiencing homelessness**? (e.g., “They were sleeping on a park bench with a large bag of their belongings next to them.”)
- **When is an observational survey NOT appropriate?**
 - “I saw a man in a red sweatshirt riding by on a bike by that looked homeless.”
 - Not enough detail (age, appearance, location, details of why you believe they are experiencing homelessness)
 - No way of telling whether they were already counted (either by another team or by an emergency shelter)



Sheltered & Unsheltered – PIT Data Collected

What information are we collecting?

1. # persons in household
2. For each person in household:
 - Age
 - Gender ● Ethnicity ● Race
3. Additional data collected:
 - # of homeless episodes
 - Length of time (# months) homeless
 - Domestic Violence ● Disability
 - Veteran Status



Domestic Violence Question

For reasons of safety, please do not ask the next question in front of two adults who have identified that they are part of the same Household: (Note to interviewer, if two+ adults are being interviewed together, skip this question.)

Did you need to leave the place you were last staying due to someone making you feel unsafe? Do you feel unable to return there because you feel unsafe?

Yes No Did not ask question

For persons feeling unsafe, ask the following question: Would you like to speak to someone who can talk to you about increasing your safety?

- If yes, direct this individual to the **National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233**

If yes to feeling unsafe: Thank you for letting me know. I have a series of additional sensitive questions to ask you. Is that ok, or do you feel like answering additional questions would compromise your safety?

Yes; it is ok to proceed with your questions. No, I am not comfortable answering any additional questions. (Thank this person and end survey.)



Sheltered & Unsheltered Interviews

- Ask all questions as written on the Interview Form or within the Mobile App.
- Inform participants
 - Participation is voluntary
 - Individuals may refuse to answer some or all questions.
 - Refusal to participate will not result in a denial of shelter, service, or other assistance.
- If a household/individual does not want to participate, the interview form and mobile app will direct you to only collect the demographic questions based on observation.
- If person refuses to give initials, assign initials and complete rest of interview.
- Disability status, ask no questions regarding the nature or severity.



Counting Veterans

- Major focus on ending veterans homelessness.
- For the unsheltered count, a veteran is defined as someone who:
 - a) served in the U.S. Armed Forces, or
 - b) activated, into active duty, as a member of the National Guard or as a Reservist
- Coordinate with SSVF providers, VAMCs and other veteran serving organizations
- Coordinate with veterans who have experienced homelessness to:
 - Identify unsheltered locations
 - Participate during unsheltered count

Standards for Counting Youth

EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL COUNTIES:

1. Coordinate with other systems that serve youth
2. Engage youth
3. Identify hot spots
4. Plan with safety in mind
5. Provide local training

2020 POINT-IN-TIME COUNT STANDARDS FOR COUNTING YOUTH FOR PENNSYLVANIA'S BALANCE OF STATE COCS

Youth (defined):

A household with no household members over age 24. A youth household includes:

- Children under age 18 who are living without a parent/guardian
- Unaccompanied individuals aged 24 and below
- Two or more individuals aged 24 or below living in a household with no other person over age 24
- Individuals aged 24 and below with their own children ("Parenting Youth")

STANDARDS FOR COUNTING YOUTH: EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL COUNTIES

1. Coordinate with other systems serving youth
2. Engage youth
3. Identify hot spots
4. Plan with safety in mind
5. Provide local training

1. Coordinate with one or more other systems serving youth. These include:

- Regional Coordinators of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH)
 - To find your Regional ECYEH Coordinator, visit <https://directory.center-school.org/homeless/contacts/>
- School District Liaisons for Homeless Students
 - To find the school district liaison for your geographic area, visit <https://directory.center-school.org/homeless/liaison/search>
- Child welfare. This may include foster care, independent living specialists, etc.
- Juvenile or adult justice system. This may include parole/probation officers, reintegration workers, etc.
- Behavioral health. This may include coordination with the child and adult MH system.
- Other organizations serving youth
 - Some communities within our CoC have organizations and programs that specifically serve or target youth. These may include homeless assistance providers, Boys & Girls Clubs, mental health organizations, employment programs, GED providers, LGBTQ organizations, etc.

Attachment A - 1



Counting Unsheltered Youth

- DMA has provided information to the Regional Coordinators of the Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Program, so they are aware of PIT date
- DMA encourages communities to work with youth-serving organizations or partners (see *Standards for Counting Youth resource on CoC PIT website for ideas*)



Key Partners in the Unsheltered PIT Count

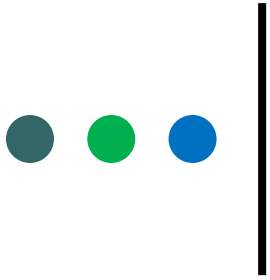
- People Who Have Experienced Homelessness
- Local Government Officials and Staff (City, County, State)
- Community Leaders/Homelessness Advocates
- Local Funders
- Local Law Enforcement
- Local Colleges and Universities
- Media
- Homeless and Community Service Providers
- Federal Partners
- Members of the Faith-Based Community



Unsheltered Count – Resources

All information will be uploaded to the CoC website: <https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/2020-pit-count/>

- *2020 Booklet for the Unsheltered Point-in-Time Count*
- Interview Forms, Summary Form
- PowerPoint training slides for volunteers
- Archived webinars and training slides



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Role: County Unsheltered PIT Coordinator

- Establish a committee of volunteers
- Select method of conducting the count based on local capacity
 - Street count
 - Service-Based Count
 - Combination of methods
- Volunteer training
 - Required by HUD
 - May be done immediately prior to count
 - Power Point training slides provided by DMA



Role: County Unsheltered PIT Coordinator

Tasks of the volunteer committee, in partnership with coordinator, may include:

- Outreach to youth serving orgs, school district homeless liaisons, veteran serving orgs, etc.
- Notification of police, first responders, etc.
- Media publicity
- Volunteer recruiting; Determining volunteer assignments
- Communicating with volunteers prior to the PIT so they know what to expect, bring, etc.
- Map out which teams will count specific areas, to prevent overlap/duplication
- Provide app instructions, if relevant
- Coordinate with CES Regional Manager/local CE centers
- Soliciting donations for incentive/care packages; Assembling care packages
- Developing a transportation plan (Are persons offered hotel/motel voucher and/or transportation to emergency shelter?)
- Collecting supplies – clipboards, pens, flashlights, etc.
- Ensuring sufficient copies of Interview Forms
- Designating drop-off location or person for all Interview Forms



Role/After the Count: County Unsheltered PIT Coordinator

Role of the Unsheltered County Coordinator

By February 14, 2020:

- Submit **all Interview Forms** (one per counted household), if completing surveys on paper
 - If completing surveys via mobile app, volunteers will submit by January 23rd
- Complete and submit the **County Summary Form** (required whether you used paper surveys or app)
- The # of homeless households reported on the Summary Form must equal the # of Interview Forms



Role: All Housing Providers

- **Housing Inventory Chart online survey:**
 - The week of the PIT count, DMA will send a link to an online survey. ALL projects and project types (ES, TH, RRH, PSH, other permanent housing) must complete the online survey... **even if the program is in HMIS**



Role: Emergency and Transitional Housing Providers

- Housing Inventory Chart online survey

PLUS

- Point in Time Count: Using HMIS *or* Interview Forms *or* Mobile App
 - ES and TH providers will be notified in advance of the PIT count as to whether their data quality passes pre-test. If yes, the project will not need to collect sheltered PIT data.
 - All other projects will collect data using Interview Forms or using the Mobile App. (Program level decision.)



Role: Community Partners

- There may be ways to get involved with the PIT Count! DMA can help connect interested partners with the local PIT coordinator if needed. Volunteer/partnership opportunities may include:
 - Volunteering during the count conducting surveys
 - Collecting or assembling incentives/care packages
 - Spreading the word in your community about the count/outreaching to community partners



Contact Information

- Jessica Sones or other DMA staff –
 - pahomelesscount@dma-housing.com
 - (215) 576-1558
- **CoC PIT Count website:**
 - <https://pennsylvaniacoc.org/2020-pit-count/>



Next Steps

- 11/15/19 PIT webinar – link to be posted
- County-level planning meetings begin/ continue
- November 2019: Unsheltered PIT interview forms distributed
- November 2019 through January 2020: Confirmation of all sheltered programs and PIT contact, identification of new/closed programs
- January 2020: HMIS Data quality check of sheltered programs
- JANUARY 22, 2020: PIT COUNT DATE



ArcGIS Mobile App

- Presenter:
 - Brendan Auman, DCED



Tips from County Unsheltered PIT Coordinator

- Chris Kapp, Cumberland County Housing And Redevelopment Authority